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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Public Affairs

Selected Speeches and News Releases

October 25 - November 1, 1990

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

USDA TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARING ON RABIES VACCINE FOR PENNSYLVANIA WILDLIFE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25—A public hearing regarding a proposed field trial for a genetically engineered wildlife rabies vaccine will be held in Harrisburg, Pa., the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today. The protocol for the proposed trial, the first month report of a trial already underway in Virginia and additional safety data will be available on request.

The hearing, jointly sponsored by the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, will be held 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1:30-4 p.m., Nov. 14 at the Center City Holiday Inn, 23 S. Second St. at Chestnut St., in Harrisburg. Those interested in attending are asked to notify USDA by Nov. 6.

"We encourage those with questions, concerns or comments to register their thoughts at this meeting or to send them to us in writing," said James W. Glosser, APHIS administrator. State and federal experts will be on hand to provide information and to answer questions, Glosser said.

The proposed field trial calls for enclosing an encapsulated vaccine in a bait that is especially attractive to raccoons—the primary reservoir of rabies on the Eastern seaboard. In laboratory tests raccoons that eat the vaccine-laden bait are immunized against rabies and are prevented from transferring the disease to domestic animals or humans.

The application to conduct the Pennsylvania trial was submitted to APHIS by the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology, Philadelphia, Pa. Wistar began a test of the same vaccine on Aug. 20 on Parramore Island, Va., after receiving consent from APHIS, the state of Virginia and the Nature Conservancy, owner of the island. At the hearing, Wistar will present a first month report of the Virginia trial and make copies of the report available to the public. A copy of this report as well as safety data and the protocol for the proposed Pennsylvania trial are available from USDA.

Rabies viruses contain a pathogenic portion as well as a harmless coat protein portion. The vaccine was developed by removing from the rabies virus a small number of genes that code only for the harmless coat

protein and transferring them into the vaccinia virus, the same one formerly used in smallpox vaccination. The modified vaccinia virus is then encapsulated and put in a bait to be consumed by raccoons who are then immunized against rabies by the harmless coat proteins without developing the disease. There is no risk of rabies associated with this vaccine.

Those who would like to attend the hearing, to receive Wistar reports or to send written comments are asked to contact Dr. Robert B. Miller, Senior Staff Veterinarian, Veterinary Biologics, USDA-APHIS-BBEP, Rm. 832, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Anita Brown (301) 436-5931

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Oct. 26, through midnight Thursday, Nov. 1.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1988, 1989, and 1990 crop base quality loan rates of 51.80, 50.00 and 50.27 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1988, 1989 and 1990 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1990-crop upland cotton sold during this period.

Based on data for the week ending Oct. 25, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price	
Northern Europe Price	82.14
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	13.18
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.15
Average U.S. location	0.35
Sum of Adjustments	<u>-15.68</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	66.46 cents/lb.
Coarse Count Adjustment	
Northern Europe Price	82.14
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	<u>-77.23</u>
	4.91
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton	<u>-4.10</u>
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0.81 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Thursday, Nov. 1.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

#

USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGE IN 1990 HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVEL

WASHINGTON, OCT. 26—Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced this week’s honey-loan repayment levels.

The new weekly honey-loan repayment level for 1990-crop honey is 44.0 cents per pound for all colors, table and nontable grades, effective at 12:01 a.m. Oct. 26, 1990.

The rates for 1989-crop honey are unchanged, as follows:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound, 1989 crop Table

White	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0
Light Amber	36.0
Amber	35.0
Nontable	33.0

Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying their 1989 or 1990 honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601
John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207

#

A BACTERIUM MAY HELP STRAWBERRIES COMBAT FRUIT ROT

WASHINGTON—A compound produced by a naturally occurring bacterium on apple leaves and fruit can delay fruit rot on harvested strawberries, says a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

Fumioni Takeda, a USDA horticulturist, says the compound, called pyrrolnitrin, doubled—to four days—the time that an experimental bath kept berries free of rot. That gain can be critical in marketing berries, he says.

If further tests continue to be promising, approval by the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration must be obtained before the compound could be used on strawberries.

Approval would be good news for strawberry growers, in light of restrictions placed on fungicides by EPA, says Takeda of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Ten to 20 percent of harvested strawberries are lost during the time between harvest and transportation to consumers, he says. Most of this damage is caused by rot-causing fungi. "And some fungi have developed resistance to currently available fungicides," Takeda says.

Takeda discovered that pyrrolnitrin will repel fungi causing blue mold and gray mold on harvested berries.

Wojciech Janisiewicz, an ARS plant pathologist who works with Takeda, located the bacterium—*Pseudomonas cepacia*—on the leaves and fruit of apple trees. Janisiewicz found the bacterium produces pyrrolnitrin to fend off other microorganisms competing for food.

“The bacterium feeds on the sugars, minerals and nutrients available on leaves,” says Takeda. He and Janisiewicz are based at the ARS Appalachian Fruit Research Station in Kearneysville, W.Va.

Because of this rich food source, Takeda says, “the bacterium must have an ‘edge’ of some kind to outcompete other microorganisms and better its chances of survival.” He says this edge—pyrrolnitrin—“inhibits the functioning of other bacteria, yeast and fungi” on apple trees, including the rot-causing fungi on berries.

To find out if pyrrolnitrin would effectively delay the presence of fruit rot, Takeda and Janisiewicz dipped one batch of harvested berries in a 250-milligrams-per-liter solution of pyrrolnitrin. They dipped the other batch in water.

Removed from the dip, the two batches were first stored at about 34 degrees F. for seven days and then moved to 64 degrees F. The dipping process was repeated with two new batches, this time stored at 64 degrees F.

At both storage temperatures, the treated berries fought off fruit rot twice as long as the berries dipped in water. Without pyrrolnitrin, berries lasted about two days at most before the rot appeared.

As an added bonus, “we got the same amount of rot control from pyrrolnitrin while using only one-tenth the concentration of standard fungicides such as benomyl, captan and iprodione,” says Takeda.

“The way we’re using pyrrolnitrin now is still experimental,” Takeda says. Further research should determine even more effective ways in which pyrrolnitrin can be applied to postharvest berries, he adds.

“However, the bacteria have their own conditions for survival,” Takeda says. “The question is whether they will be able to survive if we apply them to strawberry leaves.” Further testing is needed before commercialization of the bacterium as a biocontrol agent is considered.

Takeda and Janisiewicz are considering directly applying the bacterium to strawberry plants to control rot-causing fungi.

Doris Stanley (301) 344-2767

Issued: Oct. 26, 1990

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U.S. AND MEXICO SIGN AGRICULTURAL MARKET NEWS ACCORD

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture and Mexico have signed a memorandum of understanding for sharing agricultural market news data.

Assistant Secretary for Marketing and Inspection Services Jo Ann R. Smith; Kenneth C. Clayton, deputy administrator for marketing programs with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, and Juan Jose Larriva, director-general of the Servicio Nacional de Informacion De Mercados, of Mexico's commerce department, participated in the signing ceremony at USDA on Oct. 25.

The agreement, a memorandum of understanding, provides for exchange of experts and expertise in the gathering and dissemination of agricultural market information, exploring possibilities for standardizing language in market news operations, and developing procedures to exchange agricultural market news data between the two countries.

The five-year agreement focuses on fruits, vegetables, livestock, meat, grain, speciality crops, poultry and dairy products.

Satellite transmissions between news gathering stations and hand-held computer news gathering—both introduced to USDA market news operations in 1988 to speed and economize news dissemination—are some of the technologies to be shared between the countries.

Smith said market news has been a tremendous tool for U.S. producers, and expects that Mexican producers will also benefit from the service. "The agreement will benefit not only producers but also consumers in all of North America," she said.

"I think this agreement is very timely. In the last few years the situation in Mexico has changed remarkably," said Larriva. "Annual agricultural exports—much of them produce and meat, and much of them to the United States—rose from \$4 billion dollars to \$16 billion dollars in the past four years. Mexico now imports about 10 million metric tons of U.S. grain annually."

Clayton said the agreement "helps solidify relationships between the two governments, and reflects the U.S. interest in further developing trade relations with Mexico. In competitive economies, access to information is a foundation stone.

"Mutual benefits would accrue to both countries because they could learn from each other on how best to provide market news services. To

be timely and effective, these services must respond to changes in industry and marketing arrangements, while also adapting to new technology that becomes available for improving the services,” Clayton said.

Agricultural commodity news gathering and dissemination began in the United States over 70 years ago. Five years ago the government of Mexico initiated a similar system. Mexican officials have consulted regularly with their USDA counterparts on a variety of market news system issues, culminating in the agreement signed today.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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MARVIN E. JENSEN TO PRESENT MORRISON LECTURE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—Marvin E. Jensen, director of Colorado State University’s Institute for Irrigation Management, will discuss major issues facing the agriculture, turf and landscape industries when he presents the 1990 B.Y. Morrison Memorial Lecture Monday.

The effects of increasing population, growing environmental concerns and changing economic conditions are among the major issues Jensen will address at 9:30 a.m. on Oct. 29 at the International Irrigation Exposition and Conference in Phoenix; Ariz.

“Dr. Jensen is recognized as one of the world’s leading irrigation authorities,” said R. Dean Plowman, administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service, which sponsors the annual lecture.

Co-sponsor of this year’s lecture is the Irrigation Association, based in Arlington, Va.

“During the past 40 years, the world witnessed a unique, one-time era in the development of irrigated agriculture with the most rapid expansion of irrigated land in history,” Jensen said. “The focus is now on improving the management of irrigated agriculture to increase the production per unit of water consumed.”

As a researcher, Jensen improved procedures for estimating crop water requirements and developed the first computerized irrigation scheduling program released by ARS. He recently completed a three-year term as president of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage.

Jensen was a researcher and leader of irrigation projects and programs

for the ARS from 1955 until 1987, He was the agency's national program leader for water management research from 1979 to 1987.

He has consulted extensively overseas for the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and domestically for many public and private interests.

The B.Y. Morrison Memorial Lecture series was established in 1968 by the ARS to recognize scientists who have made outstanding contributions to ornamental horticulture and other environmental sciences, to encourage the wide application of these sciences and to stress the urgency of preserving and enhancing natural beauty.

B.Y. Morrison was a pioneer in ornamental horticulture and the first director of the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. His legacy to the American public includes dozens of new ornamental plants including the famous Glenn Dale azaleas.

Kim Kaplan (301) 344-3932

#

USDA RESCHEDULES PUBLIC MEETINGS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH MELALEUCA

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is rescheduling two public meetings, announced earlier, to get input on whether to declare *Melaleuca quinquenervia* (a non-native tree) a “federal noxious weed.”

The meetings now are scheduled from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. local time in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., on Nov. 16; and in San Francisco, Calif., on Nov. 20. Locations are: room 422, Broward County Governmental Center, 115 S. Andrews Ave., Ft. Lauderdale; and room 1415, 630 Sansome St., San Francisco. Originally, the meetings had been scheduled for Oct. 29 and Oct. 31 in the same locations.

The meetings are being held in response to a request by Florida officials who fear uncontrolled spread of the *Melaleuca* species could threaten plants and animals—even entire ecosystems. However, for decades the tree was widely planted because of its perceived benefits—ability to control erosion, provide natural fences and windbreaks, furnish wood, and serve as an ornamental and a source of food for bees. The tree now covers about 1-1/2 million acres in southern Florida, in addition to plantings in California, Hawaii, Texas and Puerto Rico.

Notice of the meeting will be published in the Oct. 30 Federal Register. The deadline for comments by mail remains as earlier announced: Nov. 24. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 90-158 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

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USDA EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD ON PROPOSED INSPECTION AND WEIGHING FEE INCREASE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service is extending until Nov. 30 the comment period on its proposal to increase fees for inspection and weighing services.

The proposal, originally published in the Federal Register on Oct. 1, would increase by 13.5 percent fees for official inspection and weighing services performed under the U.S. Grain Standards Act. The fees were last revised on Jan. 5, 1987.

FGIS Administrator John C. Foltz said the comment period is being extended 30 days to provide additional time for interested parties to submit written comments. The original proposal called for a response by the close of business Oct. 31.

The proposed fee change is intended to cover, as nearly as practical, the agency's operating costs including related supervisory costs. By law, all FGIS inspection and weighing activities are self-funding.

Notice of the comment period extension will appear in the Oct. 30 Federal Register. For more information or to submit written comments, contact Paul D. Marsden, Federal Grain Inspection Service, USDA, Room 0628-S, Box 96454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454; telecopy users may send responses to the FGIS automatic telecopier machine at (202) 447-4628.

Allen Atwood (202) 475-3367

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APPOINTMENTS MADE TO NATIONAL PLANT GENETICS RESOURCES BOARD

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter today announced 13 new appointments and eight reappointments to the National Plant Genetics Resources Board for two-year terms.

The board advises the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges on policy relating to the problems, needs and welfare of the nation's plant genetic activities as they affect food production. This includes the national plant germplasm repositories, the Germplasm Resources Information Network (GRIN) and other programs for the conservation and utilization of plant genetic resources.

The board also considers international issues affecting the U.S. National Plant Germplasm System as well as policy recommendations that may affect programs in USDA's Agricultural Research Service and the Cooperative State Research Service.

Newly appointed members are: Harry B. Collins, Delta and Pine Land Co., Scott, Miss.; Cary Fowler, Rural Advancement Fund International, Pittsboro, N.C.; Amy F. Iezzoni, Michigan State University, Lansing, Mich.; A. Bruce Maunder, DeKalb Genetics Corp., Lubbock, Texas; Gary P. Nabhan, Native Seeds/SEARCH, Tucson, Ariz.; Donald Plucknett, The World Bank, Washington D.C.; Mazo Price, University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff, Ark.; P. Roger Rowe, International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center, Lisboa, Mexico; Omelio Sosa, Jr., ARS, Canal Point, Fla.; Antonio Sotomayor-Rios, ARS, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico; John C. Thorne, Northrup King Co., Washington, Iowa; Herman Warren, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Va.; and Susan Wessler, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

Reappointed are: Michael P. Davis, American Malting Barley Association, Milwaukee, Wis.; Donald N. Duvick, Johnston, Iowa; Richard L. Lower, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.; Gene Namkoong, USDA's Forest Service, Raleigh, N.C.; Ronald L. Phillips, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minn.; M. Allen Stevens, Petoseed Company Inc., Woodland, Calif.; and David H. Timothy, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, N.C.

Henry L. Shands, ARS national program leader for germplasm, will continue as executive secretary.

Kim Kaplan (301) 344-3932

#

ARKANSAS ADVANCES TOWARD ERADICATION OF CATTLE BRUCELLOSIS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has advanced Arkansas from Class B to Class A to mark its progress toward eradicating cattle brucellosis. The status was achieved through cooperation of the livestock industry, state officials, veterinarians and others. As a result, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is lifting certain restrictions on the interstate movement of cattle from Arkansas.

With the advance of Arkansas to Class A, only five states remain in Class B: Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas. At present, 15 states (including Arkansas) and Puerto Rico are in Class A and 30 states plus the U.S. Virgin Islands are free of cattle brucellosis.

Brucellosis classification reflects the number of herds that are infected in a state. Class A status means that no more than 0.25 percent of the herds are infected. Class B status indicates an infection rate higher than 0.25 percent but lower than 1.5 percent.

Brucellosis, sometimes called "Bang's disease," causes abortion, reduced fertility and lower milk yields in cattle. Nationwide, cattle producers still incur annual production losses of more than \$12 million from brucellosis. Humans can be infected by drinking unpasteurized milk from infected animals or by handling aborted fetuses from brucellosis-infected animals.

Comments on the action will be accepted if they are received on or before Dec. 24. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 90-210 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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BEETLE BAIT TESTED IN NATIONAL EFFORT TO PROTECT GROUNDWATER

WASHINGTON, Oct. 30—A bait that tricks corn rootworm beetles into eating one last quick meal—a tiny serving of insecticide—is being widely tested for the first time, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist said today. Besides insecticide, the bait contains a compound that attracts the beetles, along with a feeding stimulant. In August the bait was spread on leaves of more than 1,000 acres of corn in South Dakota, Nebraska, Illinois, Iowa and Indiana.

“If the new bait works, corn farmers could dramatically cut insecticide use,” said Gerald R. Sutter, an entomologist with USDA’s Agricultural Research Service in Brookings, S.D. “That would be an important step in helping keep pesticides out of the nation’s groundwater.”

“With the bait, we’re using only about two percent of the insecticide normally used in sprays for adult corn rootworm beetles,” said Sutter. “They feed on the bait until they get a toxic dose of insecticide—which sometimes takes less than two minutes.” Sutter is based at the ARS Northern Grain Insects Research Laboratory in Brookings, S.D. The research agency is conducting the study in cooperation with agricultural experiment stations in the five states.

The study is being carried out in support of a national program initiated by President Bush to protect groundwater from contamination by fertilizers and pesticides. Farming technologies are being developed that will reduce the likelihood of agricultural chemicals entering water supplies, said Richard C. Amerman, ARS scientific planning advisor in Beltsville, Md.

Sutter said preliminary results show that the bait lowered beetle populations. Next spring he expects results on whether the reduction was enough to significantly lower egg laying by the pest.

Julie Corliss (415) 559-6069

#

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM PAYMENTS TO TOTAL \$1.6 BILLION

WASHINGTON, Oct. 30—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter announced today that full cash payments of more than \$1.6 billion will be issued to about 330,000 producers participating in the Conservation Reserve Program. “USDA’s Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service will notify its county offices today to immediately issue annual CRP rental payments,” Yeutter said. “I’m pleased that USDA can make these payments, which are essential to many producers, without any further delay.”

The annual rental payments are for contracts producers signed to place cropland in the CRP in crop years 1986-90. This is the fiscal year 1991 payment.

Under the CRP, producers agree to retire highly-erodible and other eligible cropland from production for 10 years. In return, USDA makes annual rental payments to the producers and shares with them the cost of establishing an approved vegetative cover. To date, 33.9 million acres have been placed in the CRP.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

Robert Feist (202) 447-6789

#

USDA DECIDES FOUR ANIMAL WELFARE ACT COMPLIANCE CASES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31—The U.S. Department of Agriculture settled four cases during September to enforce the humane care and treatment of animals regulated under the Animal Welfare Act.

James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said the cases resulted from earlier charges. Details are:

—United Airlines, Inc., of Chicago, Ill., was assessed a \$7,500 civil penalty by an administrative law judge and was ordered to cease and desist from future violations of the Animal Welfare Act. USDA brought charges against the airline because it allegedly failed to comply with prescribed standards to ensure the safety and comfort of live animal shipments it accepted for transit.

The alleged violations occurred in 1988 and 1989, when the airline carried dogs in transit from Tampa, Fla., to Portland, Ore., on Oct. 9, 1988, and from Fargo, N.D., to Boston, Mass., as well as from Denver, Colo., to New York, N.Y., on Feb. 12, 1989, and from New York, N.Y., to Denver, Colo., on Feb. 15, 1989, without checking on the animals at appropriate times to determine if they were experiencing any obvious signs of physical distress.

Also, USDA charged that in each instance the dogs were shipped in travel cages that were too small for them to turn about freely in a standing position using normal body movements, stand and sit erect, and lie in a natural position. Other violations were alleged because the travel cages did not bear labels indicating the upright position and presence of live animals, nor did they carry instructions for feeding and watering the animals.

—Northwest Airlines, with its main business office in St. Paul, Minn., agreed to the issuance of a cease-and-desist order and to pay a \$1,500 civil penalty without admitting or denying USDA charges that it failed to comply with transportation standards of the Animal Welfare Act. USDA alleged that on Dec. 4, 1986, the company accepted and transported from Sioux Falls, S.D., to West Palm Beach, Fla., 12 dogs in six shipping containers, three of which were too small for the animals to turn about freely in a standing position, sit erect and lie in a natural position. Other alleged violations occurred when there was failure to provide the animals with food and water, to get a written guarantee from the shipper to pay for all expenditures associated with a C.O.D. shipment and to promptly contact the consignee after the shipment arrived.

—Otis Noc, doing business as Nokota Kennels in Rising Sun, Ind., agreed to the issuance of an order by an administrative law judge to pay a \$5,000 civil penalty and cease and desist from future violations of the Animal Welfare Act. The order also suspended Noc's animal dealer's license for at least 90 days and until his kennels are in full compliance with federal regulations. If he is in compliance by the end of the suspension period, a supplemental order will be issued to reinstate his license privileges. The penalty was imposed because Noe allegedly violated housing, sanitation, identification, recordkeeping and veterinary care standards for dogs held at his commercial facility on four occasions between Aug. 29, 1988, and Jan. 11, 1989.

—Delta Airlines, of Atlanta, Ga., agreed to a cease-and-desist order and to pay a \$10,000 civil penalty to settle multiple charges of violating

transportation standards for dogs, cats and other live animals. Also, as part of the settlement, Delta agreed to create a training program approved by USDA and, on a continuing basis, provide classes for all company employees who accept or handle live animals for transport. The airline also agreed to furnish USDA with a written report certifying the date, location and number of employees who attended the training sessions.

Allegedly, on 16 occasions between Jan. 21, 1987, and Dec. 19, 1988, Delta employees accepted dogs, cats, primates, rabbits and foxes in travel cages that did not conform to litter, space and ventilation requirements. Also, the containers allegedly did not bear labels indicating the upright position and presence of live animals. Further, the airline allegedly failed to provide the animals with food and water and, in some instances, failed to get a written guarantee from the shipper to pay for all expenditures associated with a C.O.D. shipment and failed to promptly contact the consignee after the shipment arrived.

In addition to the four cases resolved in September, two new charges were initiated, Glosser said. Those charged will have an opportunity to respond and request a hearing before an administrative law judge.

Since 1966, the Animal Welfare Act has required that the care and treatment of certain animals be provided according to standards administered by APHIS. Animals protected by the law must be provided adequate housing, handling, sanitation, food, water, transportation, veterinary care and protection against extremes of weather and temperature. The law covers animals that are sold as pets at the wholesale level or are used for biomedical research or for exhibition purposes.

USDA enforces the act primarily through administrative prosecutions. Many of these cases are resolved through the consent decision provisions of the regulations. Under these provisions, USDA and the respondent named in the complaint agree to a stipulated order and penalties. If the case is not settled, there is a hearing before an administrative law judge who issues a decision. Any party may appeal the administrative law judge's decision to the USDA's judicial officer. The respondent may appeal an adverse decision by the judicial officer to the U.S. Court of Appeals. Failure to respond to the charges in the complaint results in a default order assessing penalties.

Dealers, breeders, brokers, transportation companies, exhibitors and research facilities must be licensed or registered. USDA personnel make

periodic, unannounced inspections to help assure compliance. Action is taken against violators after efforts to secure compliance are unsuccessful.

Questa Glenn (301) 436-7799

#

USDA AFFIRMS THAT ALL VETERINARY BIOLOGICS PRODUCTS MUST BE LICENSED

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is notifying manufacturers of animal vaccines and other veterinary biologics that they may not ship any unlicensed products after Dec. 31. Both the manufacturer and the product must be licensed to assure that all products are pure, safe potent and effective.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will consider an exception to this deadline for small, intrastate producers who have been diligent in applying for a product license but have not completed the process. No exception would run beyond June 30, 1991. Thereafter, manufacturers producing an unlicensed product may not ship it until the license has been approved.

The deadline is imposed to implement amendments to the Virus-Serum-Toxin Act passed by Congress as part of the Food Security Act of 1985. These amendments impose a licensing requirement on veterinary biologics even if they are sold in the same state in which they were manufactured. The deadline was Dec. 31, 1989, except for products granted an extended exemption. No exemption will be extended beyond Dec. 31, 1990.

An interim rule affirming the licensing requirement takes effect Nov. 2 and will be published in Federal Register that day. The rule also details how to substantiate a request for an exception and where to send it.

Comments on the rule will be accepted if they are received on or before Dec. 3. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 90-171 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, rm. 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

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USDA LISTS SAUDI ARABIA AS INFECTED WITH AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced it will add Saudi Arabia to its list of countries affected by African horse sickness so that precautions can be taken against spreading the disease to the United States.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will now require horses imported from or transiting through Saudi Arabia to enter the United States through the port of New York only, and be quarantined at the APHIS New York Animal Import Center for at least 60 days.

The list of countries infected with African horse sickness includes all nations of Africa plus Spain, Portugal, the Yemen Arab Republic and, now, Saudi Arabia.

African horse sickness initially causes restlessness and colic and terminates in fatal pneumonia. Infected horses may exhibit lameness and a soft swelling of the head above the eyes and the underside of the chest and abdomen. All equine species are similarly affected; the disease does not strike other animals or humans.

An interim rule amending the list becomes effective Nov. 1 and will be published that day in the Federal Register. Comments on the action will be accepted if they are received on or before Dec. 1. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 90-191 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

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USDA SEEKS COMMENT ON PROPOSAL TO REVISE FRESH TOMATO STANDARDS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking public comment on a proposal to revise the size section of the U.S. standards for grades of fresh tomatoes. Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA'S Agricultural Marketing Service, said the changes, proposed by the California Tomato Board, the Florida Tomato Committee, the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange, the Florida Tomato Exchange, and the National Tomato Handler's Association, would:

- require that the size of the tomatoes in any standard shipping container be specified and marked on the container;

- establish four mandatory size designations, each with a 1/32-inch overlap;

- require that only one of the four sizes be marked on the container to eliminate the commingling of different sizes within a container.

The proponents claim their proposals reflect changes in today's modern marketing and packaging methods, and would streamline trading practices, Haley said.

Currently, USDA fresh tomato standards have six size designations with no overlap, and permit commingling of different sizes within a container.

AMS establishes grade standards and provides official grading for many agricultural products. Use of the grading service is voluntary, i.e., industry-requested, and paid for by the user.

The proposal will appear as a "request for public comment" in the Nov. 1 Federal Register. Written comments, postmarked or courier-dated no later than Jan. 2 may be sent in duplicate to the Standardization Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, rm. 2056-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Copies of the proposal and additional information are available at the same address, telephone (202) 447-5870.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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FOOD MAKERS COULD DETECT PHONY FLAVORS MORE EASILY, SAYS CHEMIST

WASHINGTON—Fraudulent flavors, priced and sold as all natural products, may be faster and easier for food manufacturers to detect, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

Research chemist Gary R. Takeoka of USDA's Agricultural Research Service said a new detection technique easily separates key flavor compounds of certain fruits into two distinctive forms—one natural and one a tipoff to synthetic flavorings.

“Only a small sample is needed for a fast, accurate check for adulterated food flavor products. This should help companies that want to offer consumers foods or flavorings made exclusively from all-natural ingredients,” he said.

Other ways to distinguish natural and synthetic compounds are slower or less accurate, or require an impractically large quantity of a compound, said Takeoka, with ARS' Western Regional Research Center in Albany, Calif.

“Consumers expect to get what they pay for,” he said, “when they buy natural flavorings for cooking, or foods with all-natural flavors like some yogurts, ice creams, pies, cakes or fruit drinks.

“Of course, a high-quality synthetic flavor could taste just as good as a pure extract from a natural source. But you shouldn't have to pay as much for imitations.”

So far, he has successfully used the new technique for analyses of flavor chemical extracts from apples, pineapples and strawberries. In experiments to pinpoint pineapple's important flavor chemicals, Takeoka tested more than 10 gallons of pineapple essence—equal to some 7,500 pineapples.

While he and co-researchers haven't studied the technique for other foods, the process might be applicable to dozens that contain two flavor forms—called enantiomers. A fused silica column, used in an analytical instrument, has an invisible lining of sugar molecules that separate the two forms.

“These forms are the mirror image of each other, just as your left hand is the mirror image of your right,” he explained. “But qualities such as aroma or potency can vary dramatically between the forms.”

A major U.S. manufacturer of jams and jellies asked Takeoka's lab to check an imported apple essence.

“We found one of the essence’s main flavor compounds, ethyl 2-methylbutyrate, was a blend of two forms,” Takeoka said. “That meant the company had paid the supplier for a higher-priced, 100-percent natural essence, but was in fact sold a blend of natural and artificial ingredients.”

According to Takeoka, a special chromatographic column made of fused silica readily distinguishes enantiomers of flavor compounds like the apple’s ethyl 2-methylbutyrate. Columns of this type, used in a standard laboratory instrument called a capillary gas chromatograph, have become available only recently, he said.

An invisible film of specially treated, donut-shaped sugar molecules called beta-cyclodextrin forms a lining in the column. “When a sample is injected into the column, one enantiomer will interact more strongly with the cyclodextrin than the other enantiomer,” Takeoka said. “This leads to a separation of the enantiomers, which is detected by the chromatograph and displayed as two distinct peaks on a printout.”

He said other potential uses of the chromatographic column include the manufacture of perfumes, medicines and lures for insect control. Each uses some chemical ingredient that can occur as two nearly identical enantiomers.

Marcia Wood (415) 559-6070

Issued: Oct. 31, 1990

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USDA RELEASES COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR SEPTEMBER

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31—Here is the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s monthly update of the weekly cost of food at home for September 1990:

Cost of food at home for a week in September 1990

	-----Food plans----- (In Dollars)			
	Thrifty	Low-cost	Moderate cost	Liberal
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Families:				
Family of 2 (20-50 years)	47.70	60.00	73.90	91.60
Family of 2 (51 years and over)	45.20	57.60	70.90	84.80
Family of 4 with preschool children	69.70	86.50	105.70	129.60
Family of 4 with elemen- tary schoolchildren	79.70	101.70	127.10	152.90
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Individuals in four-person families:				
Children:				
1-2 years	12.70	15.30	17.90	21.60
3-5 years	13.60	16.70	20.60	24.70
6-8 years	16.60	22.10	27.70	32.20
9-11 years	19.70	25.10	32.20	37.20
Females:				
12-19 years	20.70	24.60	29.80	36.00
20-50 years	20.60	25.50	30.90	39.50
51 and over	20.40	24.80	30.60	36.50
Males:				
12-14 years	20.50	28.40	35.50	41.60
15-19 years	21.30	29.40	36.50	42.30
20-50 years	22.80	29.00	36.30	43.80
51 and over	20.70	27.60	33.90	40.60
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USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service computes the cost of food at home for four food plans—thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal.

Sue Ann Ritchko, administrator of the Human Nutrition Information Service, said the plans consist of foods that provide well-balanced meals and snacks for a week.

In computing the costs, USDA assumes all food is bought at the store and prepared at home. Costs do not include alcoholic beverages, pet food, soap, cigarettes, paper goods, and other nonfood items bought at the store.

“USDA costs are only guides to spending,” Ritchko said. “Families may spend more or less, depending on such factors as where they buy their food, how carefully they plan and buy, whether some food is produced at home, what foods the family likes, and how much food is prepared at home.”

“Most families will find the moderate-cost or low-cost plan suitable,” she said. “The thrifty plan, which USDA uses to set the coupon allotment in the food stamp program, is for families who have tighter budgets. Families with unlimited resources might use the liberal plan.”

To use the chart to estimate your family's food costs:

—For members eating all meals at home—or carried from home—use the amounts shown in the chart.

—For members eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent from the amount shown for each meal not eaten at home. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent, or one-fourth the cost shown.

—For guests, add 5 percent of the amount shown for the proper age group for each meal.

Costs in the second part of the chart are for individuals in four-person families. If your family has more or less than four, total the “individual” figures and make these adjustments, because larger families tend to buy and use food more economically than smaller ones:

—For a one-person family, add 20 percent.

—For a two-person family, add 10 percent.

—For a three-person family, add 5 percent.

—For a five- or six-person family, subtract 5 percent.

—For a family of seven or more, subtract 10 percent.

Details of the four family food plans are available from the Nutrition Education Division, HNIS, USDA, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Johna Pierce (301) 436-8617

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FOOD STAMP BENEFITS, ELIGIBILITY LEVELS AND DEDUCTIONS INCREASE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31—Monthly benefits for millions of participants in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Stamp Program increased on Oct. 1. At the same time, food stamp income eligibility levels went up by about 5 percent, meaning a family can have more income and still qualify for food stamps.

"These food stamp benefits are the highest on record," said Catherine Bertini, assistant secretary of agriculture for food and consumer services. "The changes are a result of annual adjustments for the cost of living and a 3-percent increase in basic benefits mandated by law."

As a result of the increases, the maximum food stamp allotment for a family of four in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia increased from \$331 to \$352 a month—about 6 percent. Gross income levels, which help determine eligibility for households that do not include an elderly or disabled member, increased from \$1,311 a month to \$1,376 a month for a family of four. Net income levels, used to determine eligibility and benefits for all households, increased from \$1,009 to \$1,059 a month for a family of four.

Deductions from gross income, which are used to determine a household's net income, also increased. Standard deductions increased from \$112 to \$116 per household in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. Shelter deductions increased from a maximum of \$177 to a maximum \$186 a month per household for the same areas. Standard and shelter deductions are higher in Alaska, Guam, Hawaii and the Virgin Islands. The maximum dependent care deduction remained \$160 per dependent and the earned income deduction remained at 20 percent of earnings.

The following amounts are for the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia.

New Monthly Food Stamp Allotments for Households with no Income¹

Household Size

1	\$105
2	\$193
3	\$277
4	\$352
5	\$418
6	\$502
7	\$555
8	\$634
Each additional member	+\$79

New Gross Monthly Income Limits used to Determine Eligibility²

Household Size

1	\$ 681
2	\$ 913
3	\$1,144
4	\$1,376
5	\$1,608
6	\$1,840
7	\$2,072
8	\$2,304
Each additional member	+\$232

New Net Monthly Income Limits Used to Determine Eligibility and Calculate Benefits²

Household Size

1	\$ 524
2	\$ 702
3	\$ 880
4	\$1,059
5	\$1,237
6	\$1,415
7	\$1,594
8	\$1,772
Each additional member	+ 179

¹ There will be corresponding increases in Alaska, Guam, Hawaii and the Virgin Islands. The maximum allotments for the four person household in urban Alaska will be \$459 a month; in Rural I Alaska, \$586; in Rural II Alaska, \$713; in Hawaii, \$574; in Guam, \$519; and in the Virgin Islands, \$453.

² Amounts shown are for the 48 States & D.C., Guam, and the Virgin Islands. There are separate income limits for Alaska & Hawaii.

Phil Shanholtzer (703) 756-3286

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NEW USDA DATABASE WILL HELP PROTECT RURAL WATER SUPPLIES

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the availability of the first national computerized database with fully referenced lists of the physical and chemical properties of pesticides. With this information, USDA specialists will be able to assist farmers in managing pesticide applications under specific soil conditions to avoid causing water quality problems.

“Farmers and ranchers do not want to pollute water,” said Acting SCS Chief R. Mack Gray. “With this new database, we now have a tool that can help farmers be proactive in managing their agricultural chemicals to protect rural water supplies.”

Gray said the information in the pesticide properties database is highly reliable. “For every number in it, we have either a scientific paper or a letter from a chemical manufacturer to authenticate it. This is the first such national database that is fully referenced.”

The database, compiled by USDA’s Agricultural Research Service, consists of 16 chemical and physical properties of 92 widely used pesticides, and eventually will be expanded to over 200 pesticides with 40 properties for each.

Gray said SCS and ARS have been collaborating for years to develop simulations of soil processes that predict the movement of agricultural chemicals through soil. The simulations require data on physical and chemical properties of both soils and pesticides.

ARS Administrator R. Dean Plowman said the agricultural chemical industry deserves credit for helping establish the database, which was developed with information from chemical manufacturers through the

efforts of the National Agricultural Chemical Association. "This cooperation signals that the industry is committed to ensuring the safe and proper use of their chemicals to prevent environmental harm," Plowman said.

"The database is a major step forward for government agencies involved in water quality assessments of agrichemical use," Gray said.

The database is available to researchers on diskette. It will be available to farmers and ranchers from their local SCS offices in about 6-12 months, as soon as the database subsets have been distributed. Inquiries about the pesticide properties database should be addressed to: Systems Research Laboratory, USDA, Agricultural Research Service, BARC, Bldg. 011A, Room 165B, Beltsville, Md. 20705.

Kathy Gugulis (202) 447-9149

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